

Bushey Manor Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117242
Local Authority	HERTFORDSHIRE LA
Inspection number	312545
Inspection dates	3–4 October 2007
Reporting inspector	John Williams HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Margaret Bradburn
Headteacher	Mrs Patricia Ginsberg
Date of previous school inspection	25 November 2003
School address	Grange Road Bushey Watford Hertfordshire WD23 2QL
Telephone number	01923 226362
Fax number	01923 219276

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an HMI and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Bushey Manor Junior School caters for children aged 7 to 11 from the local community. It has become more popular in recent years, but retains classes with no more than 25 pupils in each. A below average number of pupils have minority ethnic backgrounds but a small and increasing number speak little or no English when they join the school. Fewer than average numbers are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The school has benefited from recent building work that provides excellent classrooms for Years 3 and 4. The school is working towards achieving Healthy Schools status.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Bushey Manor Junior School provides sound value for money. It is developing well into an effective school where standards are good. Parents are supportive of the school and are particularly pleased with the way the headteacher has made improvements since she took over. She has an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, as do governors. Leadership and management at all levels have improved from the time of the last inspection and are now good. There has been a sharp focus on improving standards and the quality of teaching over the last three years. Good progress has been made on the issues raised in its previous inspection and the school can demonstrate good capacity to improve further. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory although some of it is good. There has been a legacy of disruption to teaching which has had an effect on some pupils' progress over time. The curriculum to support teaching is good because it provides pupils with opportunities to enjoy subjects. For example, during the inspection, Year 6 were very enthusiastic about their visit to the theatre to see Hamlet, Year 5 were excited about the art work of Cezanne and another art lesson allowed them to experiment with different drawing techniques. Pupils really enjoy lessons, have positive attitudes to their work and develop excellent relationships with adults and other pupils. They are good at working together as they are often given the opportunity to discuss in pairs. Attendance is improving from an unsatisfactory level to around average and the measures the school has put in place to address absence are effective. Good support and guidance mean that pupils are becoming clearer about what they need to do to improve their work; they know how to stay safe and healthy. Behaviour is good. Standards have risen in English, mathematics, and science over the last three years and are now above national averages. In information and communication technology (ICT) standards have also improved and are now more in line with average expectations. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are very strong. They listen to each other well and build on each others ideas; in Year 5 pupils are particularly lucid and articulate when speaking.

Attainment when children begin school is at or above average. Progress by the end of Year 6 is satisfactory which makes pupils' overall achievement satisfactory. The school is becoming better at tracking pupils' progress from entry and is beginning to effectively set and monitor some more challenging individual targets. At the same time it recognizes it has more to do in this area.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the rate of pupils' progress over time by bringing the quality of teaching by everyone up to that demonstrated by some.
- Develop the use of assessment and target setting further in order to raise expectations and standards.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils begin school with standards that are at or above national average. By the end of Year 6 they are above average in English, mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils achieving

the expected levels at age 11 has improved over the last three years. Pupils' progress over time is satisfactory and has improved from an unsatisfactory position in 2004, although the school acknowledges that it could be better. Overall achievement from entry to leaving school is therefore satisfactory.

Pupils are independent and enthusiastic learners who have excellent listening and speaking skills. They enjoy speaking and working together and are always keen to offer an opinion. The school caters soundly for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, who improve due to effective teaching and support from teaching assistants. The more able and those with special gifts and talents are recognised and their achievement is sound.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school. They arrive happily and on time in the morning. Pupils get on very well together, whatever their background, and readily help newcomers settle into school routines. Attendance has improved and is now in line with national averages.

Behaviour is good and it is rare for lessons to be disrupted by inappropriate activities. Pupils report that there is no bullying in their school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their knowledge of different cultures and ways of life is improving due to the many opportunities provided in the curriculum. Pupils are perceptive and articulate, so they appreciate the wonders of nature and art and can discuss moral issues with maturity.

Pupils lead healthy lives by eating a balanced diet and taking part in a good range of physical activities. The introduction of the 'salad cart' at lunchtimes has increased the popularity of fresh food. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe both in school and out in public. They make a good contribution to the school community, whether as class monitors or as school councillors, and are soundly involved in local Bushey life. Their good standards in literacy and numeracy, together with their good behaviour and improving attendance, bode well for the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and, although some of it is good, its impact on progress has been only satisfactory to date. The quality of teaching, learning and progress has not been smooth and continuous in the past because some classes have had a number of different teachers. However, teachers share class plans and review progress well to make learning as seamless as possible. Even so, learning suffers when some are not confident either in their subject knowledge or with the plan from which they are working.

Teachers make learning interesting and have good relationships with their pupils. They plan very thoroughly and are starting to make good use of data to ensure work carefully matches the different ability groups. Good behaviour and pupils' positive attitudes aid learning. Organisation is good and resources are always to hand, so learning moves along at a pace. Teachers are confident in using the interactive white boards to help learning. For example, they consistently promote writing style by using a cursive font on the screen. Their overall use of ICT to support their teaching is good.

Teaching assistants are clear about their role and support pupils well. They are very enthusiastic and keen to support, but on occasions, this can distract the focus away from the class teacher. Marking is of a high quality and helps pupils to improve their work, although the introduction of new targets is not yet understood by some pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The headteacher says, 'We want to make the curriculum fun', and she has successfully directed the school to do just that. Pupils say that 'Lessons are always interesting!' and that is the reason they like coming to school. Teachers keep parents well informed on school activities for shared support of learning.

The school provides stimulating themed activities such as the Brueghel and multi-cultural weeks, which carefully link literacy and numeracy with art, design technology and appreciation of culture. Personal, social and health education is effective in promoting healthy and safe lives.

Teachers are deployed skilfully to make the most of their strengths in the curriculum. For example, in Year 6, one teacher leads on mathematics and the other on English to bring expertise to the pupils. The curriculum is adapted well to support pupils who need an extra boost to their progress.

Residential journeys, termly trips and interesting visitors positively enhance pupils' experiences. There is a satisfactory range of clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils feel safe and secure whilst in the care of the school. First aid is good and the school has well organised systems to record accidents. However, the school does not automatically follow up pupils who are absent without reason on the first day.

Pastoral care is strong. Vulnerable children are well supported and included in school life to make similar progress to others.

The school has improved systems to provide for pupils with learning difficulties. The special needs team quickly identifies those pupils who are not achieving as well as they should and gives them appropriate support to match their needs. Good links with outside professionals bring extra expertise to improve these pupils' learning.

Teachers set work accurately to challenge different ability groups. Although they use information collected from previous lessons to follow up individual needs, this does not happen consistently. The majority of pupils know what they need to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher is leading the school very well, providing a clear sense of direction that focuses on improving standards and driving up the quality of teaching. Good progress has been made in all areas since the time of the previous inspection, notably in standards and in the quality of the learning environment. The school senior leadership team and subject leaders are playing

their part in this; they understand their role well and are effective. Teaching and learning are evaluated regularly and accurately. Finances have been used well to promote improvement in areas designated as weak, and the school is very successful in acquiring resources from elsewhere, such as local business and by parents' fund raising, to supplement its budget. This means that smaller than average classes and teaching assistant support are maintained.

Governors have a good understanding of their role and of the school's strengths and weaknesses through reports and their own monitoring, including by being attached to classes. Progress from the time of the last inspection has been good. The school's self-evaluation is also good and is used well to promote improvement. It has been shaped by the input of teachers and governors and the outcomes from it feed directly into the school improvement plan.

Consequently, strategic management of the school is good. Everyone knows what needs to be done to improve further and they understand their role in this process. As is often said in the school, 'We are on a journey where we still have some way to go, but we know where we want to get to and know we can achieve it'.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

05 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bushey Manor Junior School, Bushey, Watford, WD23 2QL

Thank you for making Mrs McDermott and myself so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting and talking with you.

Bushey Manor School is an improving school. You seem to really enjoy the lessons and some of you are much better at coming to school regularly than in the past. You reach good standards in English, mathematics and science by the time you leave, but the school recognises that this could be better. Some of the teaching is good and we have asked the school to look at ways of making it all as good as the best. You clearly enjoy the fun of what you are doing and I know the trip to France was a real success! You work well with each other, the teachers and teaching assistants and behave well. You listen and speak really well.

Mrs Ginsberg and all the teachers and teaching assistants take good care of you and they are trying hard to make sure you know your targets so that you can do even better. The staff will be trying to find more ways of helping you do this.

I hope you will continue to enjoy and do well at Bushey Manor Junior School.

Yours faithfully

John Williams

Her Majesty's Inspector